

The Roots of All Recipes

Certain Basic Rules of Cookery

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While the world is being made over new in so many ways, it is time to start other reforms. Since the cost of our daily food is rising by leaps and bounds, why not consider improvements in the recipes by which it is prepared for the table and endeavor to reduce them to their lowest terms?

A recipe is an accumulation of the experience of past generations, modified to suit present-day conditions and materials. There are a few fundamental processes, which, by changes in form and flavor, become the many different recipes of which each new cookbook boasts.

An entirely new or original recipe is practically an impossibility. We might as well expect to model a garment or to build a house without drawing on the stored-up experience of all the ages.

If there is this similarity in the standard dishes, why not simplify living by unifying our recipes?

A study of "family recipes" is interesting in this connection. We find the foundation similar to the newest recipes, but the materials were unlike those we use to-day. Moreover, changes would be needed to adapt the processes to our modern utensils.

A recipe should be more than a mere list of ingredients, but that is all we find in some that have been cherished and handed on from mother to daughter.

By comparison of the pages of several cookbooks it is easy to see that, by multiplication and division, many formulas would be reduced to the same foundation. Change in form and flavor does the rest.

Therefore, the best plan is to learn the fundamental process thoroughly, and vary the form and flavor to suit our taste or the circumstances of the moment.

For a generation the cooking schools have been teaching on this basis, but they have not yet reached multitudes of housekeepers, nor have they influenced the publishers of cookbooks who wish to advertise "hundreds of new recipes."

Two Really Economical Dishes

"THE DESIGNER" designed an economy luncheon the other day. Making a virtue of necessity was nothing to what they did with pea pods and rye bread. Making a delight of necessity would be coming nearer to it. Pea pod soup tastes more of peas than any original pea soup we had ever eaten. Try it. And the "Old Glory" War Bread was more glorious than cake. This is a cold fact, not passing enthusiasm.

PEA POD SOUP, PRO-ALLY

Wash pods thoroughly before removing the peas. Shell peas, retaining any that are too small to boil and throwing them into kettle with pea pods. Allow two quarts of cold water to two quarts of pods; also one-quarter pound lean salt pork, two medium sliced onions and a carrot cut in bits. Bring to gradual boil and let simmer for two hours or more. Remove pork for use as may be needed elsewhere. Press the contents of the kettle through sieve. If sufficiently cooked everything should be soft enough to be sieved. Thin with hot water to the proper consistency. Season to taste and, if available, use a tablespoonful of beef stock or concentrated beef soup of your kind. Serve with croutons which have been browned in the oven rather than in butter if economy is to be considered. This is a typical summer soup as made by thrifty French housewives. Lima bean shells may be used in similar fashion.

"OLD GLORY" WAR BREAD

This is the bread being used in all the war countries of Europe and known as "War Bread."

1/4 pound rye flour
1/4 pound whole wheat flour
3 pounds white flour
1 quart water
1 ounce yeast
1/2 ounce salt

Besides containing more nutriment it keeps much longer, being at its best several days after baking. It can be kept at least a week without becoming stale. A. L. P.

AMERICA—1917

God of all worlds, to Thee,
Spirit of unity,
To Thee we pray,
Grant us the vision clear,
Save us from hate and fear,
Help us Thy word to hear;
Thine be "The Day!"

Peace and on earth good will!
In this quest may we still
Face martyrdom.
If we must die to save,
This the reward we crave,
Victory beyond the grave;
Thy Kingdom Come!

Let us go forth to fight,
Our faces toward the light,
Our flag unfurled,
Not for ourselves alone,
Not to save state or throne,
But to give Thee Thine own;
God Save The World!

Committee of Public Safety
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Now we are beginning to see that, if our money is to be spent intelligently, we must adopt a system of "rations" for our families not unlike that followed in the army and navy. With present market prices, few can base their buying on what each person at the table "likes." They must learn to like what they can have.

Too many otherwise intelligent people are like the woman of the slums, who wanted to "eat what I'd rather." They make no effort to learn to eat and enjoy the thing that is best.

Through the States Relation Service, the United States Department of Agriculture is doing much to show the American people how to choose food wisely, how to prepare it properly, how to avoid waste. Farmers' Bulletin 808, recently issued, is designed to help those who wish a reasonable plan for food.

Often, even now, food is bought because it appeals to eye and palate, without thought of the work it has to do in sustaining the body and providing energy for work.

WHAT INTELLIGENT RATIONING MEANS

Let us start on a new plan; find how much of the staple foods are required daily by each member of the household, then adapt our recipes to these materials.

Let us learn the relation of weights and measures to each other and of each to "calories." Especially let us study to see how we may vary a simple, wholesome food by slight additions of the flavors which have little real food value in themselves.

It is astonishing to see how few housekeepers think in terms of the actual food material used; they estimate according to the "way it looks on the plate," instead of so many ounces of meat or so much egg and milk in place of meat.

Perhaps if we reduce the recipes to simpler forms we shall have more time for the really important side of the feeding question.

One of the first points to master is the matter of substitutions, and here we must conquer our own whims and prejudices. Oleomargarine and butter are practically interchangeable in all doughs and sauces, and other fats may serve the needs of the body quite as well as these.

Examine the cookbooks. You will find that often there are two principal ways of doing things. Other recipes are merely additions to these originals.

TWIN MOTHERS OF ALL OMELETS

For example, we have the plain omelet and the puffy one, or omelet soufflé. Exactly the same materials in the same proportions are used in both. Manipulation secures the desired result. The yolk and white of the egg are beaten together for the plain omelet; for



Miss Anna Barrows, Whose Name Spells Authority Among Students of Scientific Cookery

the puffy one they are separated before beating.

The distinctive name given to an omelet is derived from its garnish or flavor. This is added to either of the original omelets. Therefore, what the housewife needs to think of is the number of eggs that it is reasonable to use for the special occasion and adapt her recipe to that.

Why make a six-egg omelet, following a recipe blindly, when one-half the size would be all that is needed to balance the ration?

A wise way to word the recipe would be "to each egg," etc. That is done in many of the schools, but sometimes the arithmetic side has not been emphasized sufficiently, and pupils have been found who did not know how to increase their individual proportions to meet the needs of a good-sized family.

Again, with custards; two types are evolved from the same proportions of the same ingredients by treating them in different ways.

The usual recipe for a custard needs four eggs and half a cup of sugar to a quart of milk. If these articles are combined and strained into a dish and let alone while cooking, a firm, jelly-like custard is the result. This is identical, whether it is put in custard cups or in one large dish, or in a plate lined with pie-crust, or combined with cooked rice or bread-crumbs, etc. The effect of heat on egg and milk is the same, and the important thing to learn is that a low temperature produces the best effect, whether in the oven or a steamer.

Many changes of flavors may be made on such a foundation custard, and the results of these are often regarded as new recipes.

The other type of custard, commonly known as stiff custard, is that which is constantly stirred while cooking. This produces a creamy effect. For soft custards the yolks of eggs, because they contain fat, are often preferred to whole eggs, and the finished product will more nearly resemble cream. A knowledge of the

composition of food helps to produce better results here, as in every case.

Cakes may all be classed under two general heads—the sponge cakes and the butter cakes. The latter are a direct derivation from the old, old pound cake. But since butter and eggs have grown so costly, we are trying to use a smaller proportion of these and more flour; therefore we have added liquid and baking powder.

All the sponge cake recipes have grown out of the one which might be found in very old cookbooks, "the weight of the eggs in sugar and half the weight of the eggs in flour."

Changed into measures, this means equal measures of eggs and sugar and flour, for a measure of sugar is about twice as heavy as one of flour. But eggs vary much in size, so it is not surprising to find in different recipes anywhere from three to six eggs to one cup of sugar and one cup of flour.

The angel cake comes under the same head, but egg whites only are used. Many recipes for sponge drops, lady fingers and layer cakes will, on analysis, be found to have practically the same proportions, with slight changes to adapt the mixture to the special shape it is to take.

But here again we have tried to make more cake with the same number of eggs, and have added liquid and more flour. Therefore we must have something like baking powder to make it light.

With these three classes of recipes—the omelets, custards and sponge cakes—far more depends on the proper manipulation of the materials and the control of heat while cooking than upon the exact quantity of materials, important as that is.

In general, a low temperature produces the best effect wherever egg is a prominent ingredient.

THE TWO "MOTHER SAUCES"

Another group, readily reduced to a common formula, is that which includes most of the cooked sauces to serve with fish, meats and vegetables. The French have long recognized two "mother sauces," the *blanche* and the *roux*, or the white and the brown, and by ringing changes on the flavors and garnish a great variety is secured.

The uncooked sauces suggest salads. Here again, though we see many recipes for salads, they all depend upon two types of dressing, the French and the mayonnaise. To the simple French dressing many different flavors are added to produce a variety. The mayonnaise is imitated by various combinations of eggs and other fats. One or the other is used with whatever is available for salad.

The bread mixtures are easily reduced to a general basis so that we may know what a pound of flour will do. Here a sliding scale

for fat, sugar, etc., may be arranged that the daily ration need not be exceeded.

Taking the figures given in Farmers' Bulletin 808, for a family of five the total food required daily for a man and a woman and three children, we shall see that, instead of buying to fit our recipes, we should know how to adapt the recipes to the required quantities of food and to the kind of food within reach.

A DAY'S RATIONS FOR A FAMILY OF FIVE

Four and a half pounds of bread will have about the same food value as three pounds of wheat or rye flour, oatmeal, corn meal, hominy or rice, or about two and three-fourths pounds of such cereals and five or six medium-sized potatoes.

Three-fourths of a cup of fat (butter or butter with oil, beef drippings or other fat)—a weekly allowance of two and a half to three pounds. In some forms this will cost twice as much as others, and yet yield no more real nutriment.

A little more than one cup of sugar, or a weekly allowance of four pounds; or an equivalent amount of some other sweet, such as one and a quarter cups of syrup or honey a day or three-fourths of a pound of dried figs or raisins a day. This means all the sugar that is used in cakes or desserts as well as on cereals or at the table.

Four pounds in all of fresh fruits and fresh or root vegetables. Here compare the cost of strawberries when they are 50 cents a box with carrots or cabbage at usual prices.

One of the following, the choice depending on the age of the children:

(a) Three quarts of milk and one pound of other foods taken from the meat and meat-substitute group.

(b) Two quarts of milk and one and a half pounds of other food taken from the meat and meat-substitute group; that is, moderately fat meats, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, dried legumes (beans, soy beans, peas, lentils, cowpeas and peanuts).

How does this compare with what you are buying? Probably most of us are spending too much for meats and sugar, and not using enough milk and vegetables or fruits.

When we know the composition of the common foods and the way each is affected by heat we shall be able to use what recipes we have more intelligently and to gradually reduce them to a few standard formulas.

Aside from the war crisis, the American people need to get back to the ground in choosing as well as producing their food.

Little Adventures in Buying

"NO, I will not buy your potatoes at the price you are asking for them," said one vegetable seller to the man who supplied him with potatoes for his trade.

"You're charging too much. The people won't buy them. I won't ask them to at the price you demand, for we are robbing them already. What does the dollar buy now?"

"How much are navy beans to-day?"
"Twenty-two cents a pound. Ain't it awful, ma'am! It makes me sick, but I can't help it." This from a vender of the popular legume, a little old lady as dry as her products. And there were tears in her eyes, too, when she spoke. The sympathy sold the beans.

"SWEETNESS" (?)

A certain grocery store on Amsterdam Avenue was asking 32 cents for three and a half pounds of sugar in a carton. Across the street the identical package was 35 cents. A venturesome customer dared to ask the vender of the 35-cent package why he charged more than his neighbor. This was the answer:

"I charge what I want to, and you can do as you please about buying."

She has. And we hope hosts of others will follow her across the street, where the sweets of sugar and of courtesy are dispensed more liberally.

A BUTTER BET

Just to prove that "tastes" may be another name for "prejudices":

An experienced butter man came into one of the big markets the other day and got into a controversy with an oleo expert, who declared that no one could tell the difference between oleo and butter. Each man laid a ten-dollar bill on the table to back his opinion. Then the butter man was blindfolded and fed samples of the best butter and of the best oleo. The friend of oleo walked off ten dollars richer, the butter man ten dollars wiser. The records do not show just how much butter was worked into the oleo for flavoring, but, even at that, the saving was 12 cents a pound.

AT YOUR SERVICE

If you are planning a new kitchen, or new equipment for the kitchen you have, write to The Tribune Institute about it. A large part of the work of our experts is helping our friends in just such ways as this. There is no charge for consultation or suggestion and no obligation is incurred.

We send out hundreds of letters in answer to inquiries as to the best kind of equipment for this purpose or that, but not all our readers understand as yet that they are free to come to the office for advice regarding all manner of household problems; that we will not only advise them about the utensils they need, but also help them in the whole planning and arrangement of the kitchen.

Getting the Most Meat for Your Money



"MEAT substitutes" are, like most substitutes, largely subterfuges. It is easy enough to get your body-building materials from other sources—eggs, milk, fish and any whole cereal will all furnish protein—but the flavor is the thing they cannot furnish. And flavor—stimulative value, savouriness and their effect on the appetite and on digestion by encouraging the flow of the digestive juices—is an item not to be overlooked.

The two ways to get the most for your money are to use the cheaper cuts, plus vegetables and skill in preparation, and to "extend the meat flavor" by combining small amounts of meat with bread crumbs, macaroni, rice and pastry. There is practically no end to what an ingenious housewife can do in this way. To encourage her, Uncle Sam has stepped into the kitchen and given some standard recipes along both of these lines, just to fire the American housekeeper's imagination.

For the simultaneous protection of the pocketbook and the appetite try these:

BRAISED BEEF OR POT ROAST

Brown the meat on all surfaces, place in closely covered kettle or other receptacle with small quantity of water and flavoring vegetables, such as onion, carrot, etc., and cook until tender. Browning the meat helps to keep in the juices. The slow cooking in water and steam makes for tenderness.

CASSEROLE ROAST

A casserole may be improvised by using a heavy earthenware dish covered with a plate. Brown round or rump of beef in fat from a slice of fried pork. Place in casserole with chopped carrot, turnip, onion, celery, etc., around it. Add two cups of water or stock, cover and cook in hot oven three hours, basting occasionally.

SAVORY BEEF

Cut a pound of top round of beef into two-inch pieces and sprinkle with flour; fry a small piece of salt pork until light brown; add beef and fry for about thirty-five minutes, stirring occasionally. Cover with water and simmer about two hours (fireless cooker may be used); season with salt and pepper or paprika. Serve with a sauce made as follows: Cook in

water twenty minutes a cup of tomatoes, part of a stalk of celery, one-half onion, three whole cloves, three peppercorns and one blade of mace or a very little nutmeg. Rub through a sieve, add some of the gravy from the meat, thicken with flour moistened with cold water and season with salt and paprika. Noodles, boiled rice, hominy or chopped potatoes, carrots and green peppers or other vegetables in season may be served on the same dish.

STEW WITH DUMPLINGS

Make stew from small pieces of meat and vegetables, cooking it on stove or in fireless cooker. Serve with dumplings made as follows: For a stew using one pound of meat mix a little more than one-third cup flour with one teaspoonful of baking powder and a pinch of salt; work in a rounding teaspoonful of butter and mix with enough milk to form a medium stiff dough. Cut into small pieces and cook in a buttered steamer over a kettle of boiling water, or remove enough gravy from the stew to expose the meat and vegetables, and place the pieces of dough on these solid materials to cook.

MEAT PIE

Meat pies are made most satisfactorily by first cooking the meat and vegetables as for a stew. Line a pan, earthenware dish or casserole with biscuit dough rolled fairly thin; put in the meat, vegetables and gravy, cover with dough and bake in a hot oven.

MEAT TURNOVERS

Place any chopped cooked meat available on circles of biscuit dough about the size of a saucer. Fold the dough over the meat, crimp the edges, and bake in a hot oven. Vegetables may be combined with the meat filling as desired, and the whole may be served with gravy.

VEAL OR BEEF BIRDS

Cut very thin meat into roughly rectangular pieces of a sufficient size for individual servings. Place on each a stuffing of bread crumbs, seasoned with chopped onions and other flavoring vegetables and herbs. Fold or roll up the meat, and skewer in place with toothpicks. Brown the rolls in fat, remove and make gravy from the fat, flour and stock if available. Place the rolls in the gravy and cook slowly until tender in a covered baking dish, a steamer or a fireless cooker.

What Your Garden Needs This Week

By FRANCES DUNCAN

A PLAN is as useful to a gardener as the plan of the theatre is to the man in the box office—and for the same reason. It enables him to see at a glance what seats are "taken" and where space is left for new comers. Forwarded gardeners make plans in January and February, but even those who are not fore-handed, and whose gardening has only begun in June, will find a plan a great convenience, almost a necessity, if every inch of ground is to be made to "do its bit."

People are always cheerfully advised to "draw plans to scale," but this is by no means easy. The simplest method is to take the squared paper that architects use, which is marked off, some with four squares, some with five to the inch (the latter is the most convenient), and on this plot out your garden.

Borrow your small son's or daughter's colored pencils and color brown or gray the squares that should be paths; color green what is properly greenward.

If the garden was planted early, then June 17 finds some crops already harvested and the ground ready for second plantings. The vines of early peas, if this crop has ripened, should be pulled up, the bed dug over and enriched and carrots or beets sown. Early beets may be followed by beans or peas or corn.

The usual practice is to let a root crop follow a "top crop"—and vice versa if the top crop is first. Always make the soil a bit better before planting the new crop.

PLANTING TO BE DONE

TOMATO PLANTS may be set out. They should stand three or four feet apart each way. These may still be bought by the dozen, or the forward-looking gardener probably has some raised from seed for late ripening. Tomatoes may be set in the place first occupied by early peas, or a single plant may be set wherever is space for it.

EGG PLANT—A few plants of these can often be had from market gardeners, and should be set out now. The culture is the same as for tomatoes.

GREEN PEPPERS—A few plants of peppers should be set out; these are very decorative, do not occupy much space, and the fruit is a valuable addition to the larder—especially in these days when it is "up" to the housewife to make interesting dishes out of very inexpensive materials. Bullnose is a good variety.

SQUASH AND MELONS may be planted. Each requires four feet of space. Plant a hill of squash every two weeks until the middle of the July and there will be squash enough for the "average family." Do not plant melons near the squash, or their flavor will be much impaired. Sow ten or twelve seeds to a hill, for insects are likely to do some thinning for you. Sift



ashes, lime, or even dry road dust over the leaves of the young cantaloupes when wet to deter the insects.

LIMA BEANS should be sown. Get poles of good length—eight or nine feet tall—and plant them first. Set the poles three feet apart. A row of pole beans on each side of a path, with poles lashed across the top, makes a very passable pergola and a bit of welcome shade in the garden. Inside the line of poles sow radish and lettuce, which, at this time of the year, will welcome the slight shade. Lima beans can be used as porch vines, and thus achieve the useful and the beautiful at the same time. For this use Burpee's giant pole lima is a good sort. Plant the seed only an inch deep, putting the bean in "eye" down.

BUSH BEANS—Make second sowings of string beans, green pod and wax varieties. Thin those that are already up so that the little plants stand five inches apart. Bountiful and Refugee are good varieties.

PEAS—Sow for a succession Little Marvel, Nott's Excelsior or other good early sorts. Sow four inches deep. Brush must be set for the peas already up, chicken wire can be used, or bamboo stakes with string stretched between, lattice-fashion. The latter is a very pretty method of staking which appeals to the feminine gardener.

CUCUMBERS—Sow for pickles. White Spine and Cool and Crisp are good sorts. Plant in hills four feet apart, putting first a shovelful of well rotted manure in each hill.

BEEFS, CARROTS, LETTUCE (romaine or head), SPINACH, are sown in rows for succession wherever is space for them.

CORN is planted until the Fourth of July. If the garden is small sow in drills. The roots of corn are near the surface, so in cultivating use a rake or a cultivator, and do not in an excess of enthusiasm dig deep with a hoe or the fine feeding roots may be broken.

CULTIVATION—All this month cultivation is important. If the ground is kept clear of weeds the vegetables make a strong growth and are better able to fend for themselves. If the planting is done in rows, rather than in beds, then a wheel hoe or a hand cultivator can be used, which greatly simplifies weeding. If a "soil mule" is maintained, and the ground kept loose for a couple of inches, the moisture is kept below where the roots get at it; they are not drawn to the surface for water, and the plant will hold its own during a drought.

A homely method, but a practical one, of giving water to newly planted tomatoes and other plants which are heavy drinkers is to sink between two plants an empty tomato can in the bottom of which three or four holes have been punched. Sink this miniature cistern level with the surface and fill it with water several times until the plant has had a good drink. This is better than giving a little every day. Add a little nitrate of soda to the water, or give manure water this way, and the plant will respond to the stimulant. If you have not been able to prepare the soil properly before planting, manure water given in this way will supply the needed nourishment.

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